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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/620,330	07/14/2003	Frederik Eaton	FULCP004X1	7945
22434	7590	06/24/2004	EXAMINER	
BEYER WEAVER & THOMAS LLP P.O. BOX 778 BERKELEY, CA 94704-0778				ROSSOSHEK, YELENA
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			2825	

DATE MAILED: 06/24/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application N .	Applicant(s)
	10/620,330	EATON ET AL.
	Examiner	Art Unit
	Helen B Rossoshek	2825

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on Amendment filed 04/12/2004.

2a) This action is **FINAL**. 2b) This action is non-final.

3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 1-12,14,15,17-23,27-31,33 and 34 is/are pending in the application.
4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6) Claim(s) _____ is/are rejected.

7) Claim(s) 13,16,24-26 and 32 is/are objected to.

8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10) The drawing(s) filed on 14 July 2003 is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.

 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) All b) Some * c) None of:
1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 04/26/2004.

4) Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
5) Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6) Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

1. This office action is in response to the Application 10/620,330 filed 07/14/2003 and amendment filed 04/12/2004.
2. Claims 1-34 remain pending in the Application.

Specification

3. The disclosure is objected to because of the following informalities: there is no Page number 26 in the Specification.

Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

4. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

5. Claims 1-6, 9, 11, 14, 15, 17-23, 27, 28, 30, 33 and 34 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Karniewicz (US Patent Application Publication 2002/0023255).

With respect to claim 1 Karniewicz teaches sizing transistors in each of the cell instances with reference to an objective function thereby resulting in a first plurality of cell subtypes for each cell type, each cell subtype corresponding to a particular cell type differing from all other cell subtypes corresponding to the particular cell type by at least one transistor dimension as shown on the Fig. 1(a) wherein the basic hierarchical

structure depicted including cell instances (102, 104, 106) resulting in a first plurality of cell subtypes (1, 2, 3) corresponding to a particular cell type having a difference in cell subtypes by at least one parameter and as a result of such structure, transistors of different sizes and shapes can be created (paragraph [0028], paragraph [0029], paragraph [0031], paragraph [0008]); and merging selected ones of the subtypes for at least one of the cell types thereby resulting in a second plurality of subtypes for the at least one of the cell types, the second plurality of subtypes being fewer than the first plurality of subtypes, wherein merging of the selected subtypes achieves a balance between the objective function and a cost associated with maintaining the selected subtypes distinct as shown on the Fig. 1(b) wherein subtypes cells (134, 136, 138, subtypes 1 and 3) and cell of type 1 (132) have a set of parameters related to its type and grouped in one cell (device) (132) comparing to the cell 100 on the Fig. 1(a) (paragraph [0031], paragraph [0032], paragraph [0078]).

With respect to claims 2-6, 9, 11, 14, 15, 17-23, 27, 28, 30, 33 and 34 Gheewala et al. teaches partitioning the cell instances for each cell type into at least one instance class, the cell instances in each instance class having a same relationship to an immediate parent cell, each instance class corresponding to one of the first plurality of subtypes as shown on the Fig. 1(b) wherein each of cell (132) (parent cell of type 1) and cells (134, 136, 138) (instances of cell type 1 and 3) have a set of parameters related to its type (paragraph [0031]) in the first plurality of subtypes of the type 1 (132); the partitioning of the cell instances is performed with reference to at least one user-defined constraint (paragraph [0054]); the partitioning of cell instances is

performed prior to the sizing of the transistors; the partitioning of cell instances is performed after the sizing of the transistors within an software design framework II (DF2) for allowing a designer of semiconductors to create customized instances of pcell (type cell) and providing a control of transistors parameters (splitting or grouping or changing width, length, i.e. size) (paragraph [0004]); the merging of the selected subtypes is performed with reference to the instance classes as shown on the Fig. 1(b) cells (134) and (138) are instances of cells of type 1 as have been defined as cell (100) of Fig. 1(a) (paragraph [0039]); the merging of the selected subtypes is performed with reference to a distance function which represents a distance between two of the selected subtypes in a metric space which relates the objective function and the cost within software which allows manipulate with cells and creating parameterized instances for implementing the geometry demonstrated on the Fig. 5 (paragraph [0004], paragraph [0054]); a decision to merge the selected subtypes is made by comparing the distance between the two selected subtypes to a threshold value within the software (DF2) for designing the semiconductors structures allowing the control of the size, parameters, orientation, shifting of the connections including meeting the specific design rule requirements (paragraph [0054], paragraph [0082]); at least one of the selected subtypes corresponds to a fixed-size subtype, the threshold value to which the distance between the fixed-size subtype and others of the selected subtypes is compared being different than the threshold value employed for comparisons among the other selected subtypes within the pcell (paragraph0054]) as shown on the Fig. 5 and shift parameters for determination of the relative orientation of the cell subtype 3 and cell subtype 2,

wherein the alignment can be controlled (paragraph [0076], paragraph [0077]); the objective function comprises at least one area and power dissipation (paragraph [0003]); the merging of the selected subtypes is performed with reference to at least one internal characteristic of the selected subtypes within parametrizing the pcell wherein the parameters can be specified (paragraph 0054]); the at least one internal characteristic comprises transistor sizes (paragraph [0004]); the merging of the selected subtypes is performed with reference to at least one external characteristic of the selected subtypes within consideration of the relationship between two cells , which were manipulated by the software DF2 (paragraph [0076]); the at least one external characteristic comprises at least one of external resistive loads for the selected subtypes, and external capacitive loads for the selected subtypes (paragraph [0074]); further comprising, prior to sizing the transistors, partitioning the cell instances for each cell type into the first plurality of subtypes as shown on the Fig. 1(a) wherein the cell (100) is presented as smaller cells (atoms) (102, 104,106, 108), which constituent the higher-order cell (paragraph [0029]); the partitioning of the cell instances comprises making subtype assignments for parent cell instances on a first level of a hierarchy of the circuit design with reference to a number of parent cell subtypes, and estimated subtype counts for child cell instances in the parent cell instances on at least one other level of the hierarchy below the first level the basic hierarchical structure shown on the Fig. 1(a0, 1(b), 1(c), wherein parent cell (100) defined as a set of child cells (102, 104, 106, 108) on the different level of the hierarchy and different subtypes (paragraph [0032]; Page 9, claim 17); each of the subtype assignments for the parent cell instances

is made with reference to a profit function representing a profit corresponding to the subtype assignment (Page 9, claim 20); further comprising mapping the first plurality of subtypes into a metric space which relates the objective function and the cost as shown on the Fig. 5 and 6 wherein the geometry (502) was determined by having the associated parameters in the metric space (such as l_x , l_y) (paragraph [0056], paragraph [0071]); comprising weighting each of the first plurality of subtypes in accordance with a number of the cell instances corresponding thereto by having a plurality of sets of parameters (weighting) corresponding to an instance (cell instance) of an abstraction (first plurality of subtypes) (paragraph [0007]); an integrated circuit desired according to the method of claim 1 (paragraph [0003]); at least one computer-readable medium having computer program instructions stored therein which are operable to perform the method of claim 1 (paragraph [0010]); an electronic system comprising at least one integrated circuit designed according to the method of claim 1 (paragraph [0010]).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

6. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

7. Claims 7,8, 10, 12, 16, 24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Karniewicz as applied to claims 1, 9 and 21-23 above, and further in view of Gheewala et al. (US Patent 6,445,065).

With respect to claims 7, 8, 10, 12, 16 and 24 Karniewicz teaches the limitations from which the claims depend. However Karniewicz lacks the specifics regarding asynchronous circuit, layout cost. Gheewala et al. teaches the circuit design corresponds to an asynchronous circuit; the circuit design corresponds to a synchronous circuit within providing a user customizable integrated circuit with synchronous and asynchronous functional units and layout architectures for clocking traces (col. 3, ll.4-8); the distance function comprises a plurality of components which includes any of a layout cost corresponding to the selected subtypes, a number of instances of each of the selected subtypes, transistor sizes for the selected subtypes, estimated transistor sizes for a merged subtype, external resistive loads for the selected subtypes, and external capacitive loads for the selected subtypes (col. 7, ll.49-55) by using the new gate feature density (distance function) such as specific regions of an integrated circuit (synchronous and asynchronous) with defining a set of different type of cells and manipulating with them and relating to a lower mask cost (col. 2, ll.64-67; col. 3, ll.1-3); the threshold value represents a tradeoff between the objective function and the cost as shown on the Fig. 13 using programmable core cells (basic cells) allows saving the cost (very little metal), power dissipation (real estate), but increases the length (density) of connection between cells (devices) (distance) (col. 13, ll.65-67; col. 14, ll.1-4). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill on the art at the time the invention was made to have used Gheewala et al. to teach the specifics subject matter Karniewicz does not teach, because a user customizable integrated circuit architecture

having regions for different types of core cells including placement and routing of the individual cells may be more efficiently completed (col. 3, ll.21-22).

8. Claims 29 and 31 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Karniewicz as applied to claim 1 above, and further in view of Pullela et al. (US Patent 5,790,415).

With respect to claims 29 and 31 Karniewicz teaches the limitations from which the claims depend. However Karniewicz lacks the specifics regarding generating a netlist as claimed. Pullela et al. teaches generating a set of path between observable nodes in a netlist representing the circuit design, each path corresponding to a sequence of signal transitions by analyzing a plurality of paths (set of paths) and each node of the integrated circuit (netlist) for identifying the “critical path” in accordance with the user constraint (required time delay) for the optimization of the netlist (col. 2, ll.47-51, ll.55-67; col. 4, ll.10-15); and sizing transistors represented in the netlist to attempt to meet a delay constraint for each path, the delay constraint corresponding to a unit delay times the number of signal transistors in the corresponding path, a plurality of individual delays of different durations being allocated among the transitions for at least one of the paths to meet the delay constraint, at least one of the individual delays exceeding the unit delay by creating a transistor model (col. 9, ll.60-64; col. 14, ll.41-42; col. 3, ll.54-59), wherein the sizing of each transistor is done for each signal transition in the model in order to meet a delay constraint (requirement) by calculating slack (the difference between arrival time and required time) for each input/output in the circuit (in the path) as shown on the Fig. 2 (col. 3, ll.54-59); at least one computer readable

medium having data structures stored therein representing a sized netlist generated according to the method of claim 1 within the computer aided design program which allows to store the netlist as a design file (col. 5, ll.24-27). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill on the art at the time the invention was made to have used Pullela et al. to teach the specifics subject matter Karniewicz does not teach, because speed and silicon area for integrated circuits being designed, there is also a continuing need to optimize the design process itself which provides the optimized netlist, such that the desired circuit netlist and circuit optimizations can be accurately obtained more quickly and efficiently during the chip design process (col. 2, ll.55-61).

Allowable Subject Matter

9. Claims 13, 16, 24, 25 and 26 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. The prior art of record does not teach comprising adjusting the threshold value to change the balance between the objective function and the cost; the cost comprises at least one of a layout cost which represents at least one layout resource required to lay out a cell corresponding to the at least one cell type, and a verification cost which represents at least one verification resource required to test a cell corresponding to the at least one cell type; the profit function relates an area gain for a given number of subtypes for the parent cell instances to a layout cost associated with the given number of subtypes; the circuit design corresponds to a hierarchy having a word level, and wherein partitioning the cells instances for each cell type into the first plurality of subtypes comprises partitioning

all cell instances corresponding to the word level and any level of the hierarchy below the word level.

Remarks

10. Examiner maintains that Karniewicz teaches the sizing of transistors for each of a plurality of cell instances by creating transistors of different size and shapes (paragraphs [0007], [0029]) for each plurality of cells instances such as 1, 2 and 3 (Fig. 1a), such that each cell type is divided into a plurality of subtypes as shown on the Fig. 1a each cell type (such as 1, 2, 3) is divided into plurality of subtypes (1,2, 3) (paragraph [0035]). Moreover Karniewicz gives an example of structuring the transistor by using merging two atoms (subtypes of the cell instance (100)), such two subtypes (102) and (104) (basic atoms), which are components of divided cell instance (100) shown on the Fig. 1a, wherein cell instance (100) has been divided onto more than two subtypes as depicted on the Fig. 1a, but selected subtypes are (102) and (104), and eventually forming the “tran” cell which can be used by any designer for designing the transistor of any size and shape within setting different parameters of basic atoms (subtypes), which will change the parameters of the cell instance (100), which is the “tran” cell (paragraph [0029]). Moreover Karniewicz discloses that when the new structure needs to be designed (with different objective function) or redesigned, user has to change only the parameters for the structure, which will affect the cost, time consuming and qualification of the designer. Based on these disclosures in Karniewicz and Gheewala and in Karniewicz and Pullela, the rejection under 35 USC § 103 on claims 7, 8, 10, 12, 16 and 24 is maintained.

11. THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL. Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

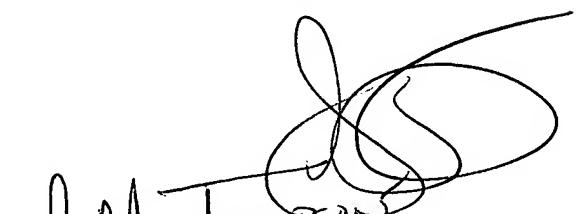
Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Helen B Rossoshek whose telephone number is 571-272-1905. The examiner can normally be reached on 7:00-4:00.

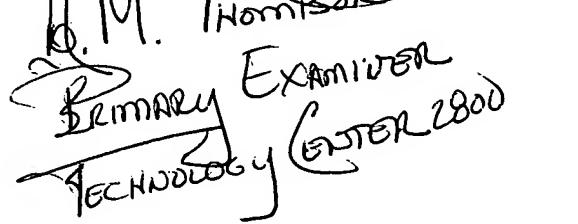
If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Matthew S Smith can be reached on 571-272-1907. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

HR



J. M. Thompson



Primary Examiner
Technology Center 2800